Virginia Practitioners' Guide to Implementing an Early Warning System (EWS)

For use with the Virginia Early Warning System (VEWS) Tool

JUNE 2010

OVERVIEW

The Virginia Practitioners' Guide to Implementing an Early Warning System serves as a supporting document for divisions and schools that are currently piloting the Virginia Early Warning System (VEWS) Tool. Developed by the National High School Center in collaboration with the Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center on behalf of the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), this guide is intended to support the early warning system for identifying students at-risk of dropping out of high school.

This guide is designed for an audience of school- and division-level practitioners and will be used to enhance their capacity for analyzing data from the VEWS tool. The aim of the guide is to support school and division efforts to make informed decisions about students who fall off-track for graduation and to identify potential interventions to get these students back on-track for graduation.

The guide is divided into six steps (Figure 1):

> 1) Establishing roles and responsibilities;
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> 2) Using the VEWS Tool;
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> 3) Analyzing the EWS data;
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> 4) Interpreting the EWS data;
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> 5) Identifying and implementing interventions; and
>
> 6) Revising the process.

The guide has been organized so that each of the six steps constitutes a section of the guide. This guide is primarily focused on supporting EWS efforts at the **high school level**, but there are places where the role of the division is explicitly mentioned to show where central office personnel can support EWS work. In each section or step the user is provided with: a brief description of the step; the outcomes anticipated; the role of the division within each step[1]; examples for using the VEWS Tool; and short- and long-term guiding questions to support data analysis. The guiding questions have been broken into two main categories: short-term and long-term strategies. The short-term strategy guiding questions are more immediate questions to guide the EWS team's understanding of student needs and interventions to support those needs within a given school year. The long-term strategy guiding questions focus on systemic and further-reaching strategies to improve school and division outcomes, often over the course of multiple school years, and are organized into three strands: research and policy; academic and social

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[1] As mentioned, the bulk of this information is aimed at supporting high school-level implementation; however, the role of the division is critical. Thus, in each step there is a section dedicated specifically to the role of the division.
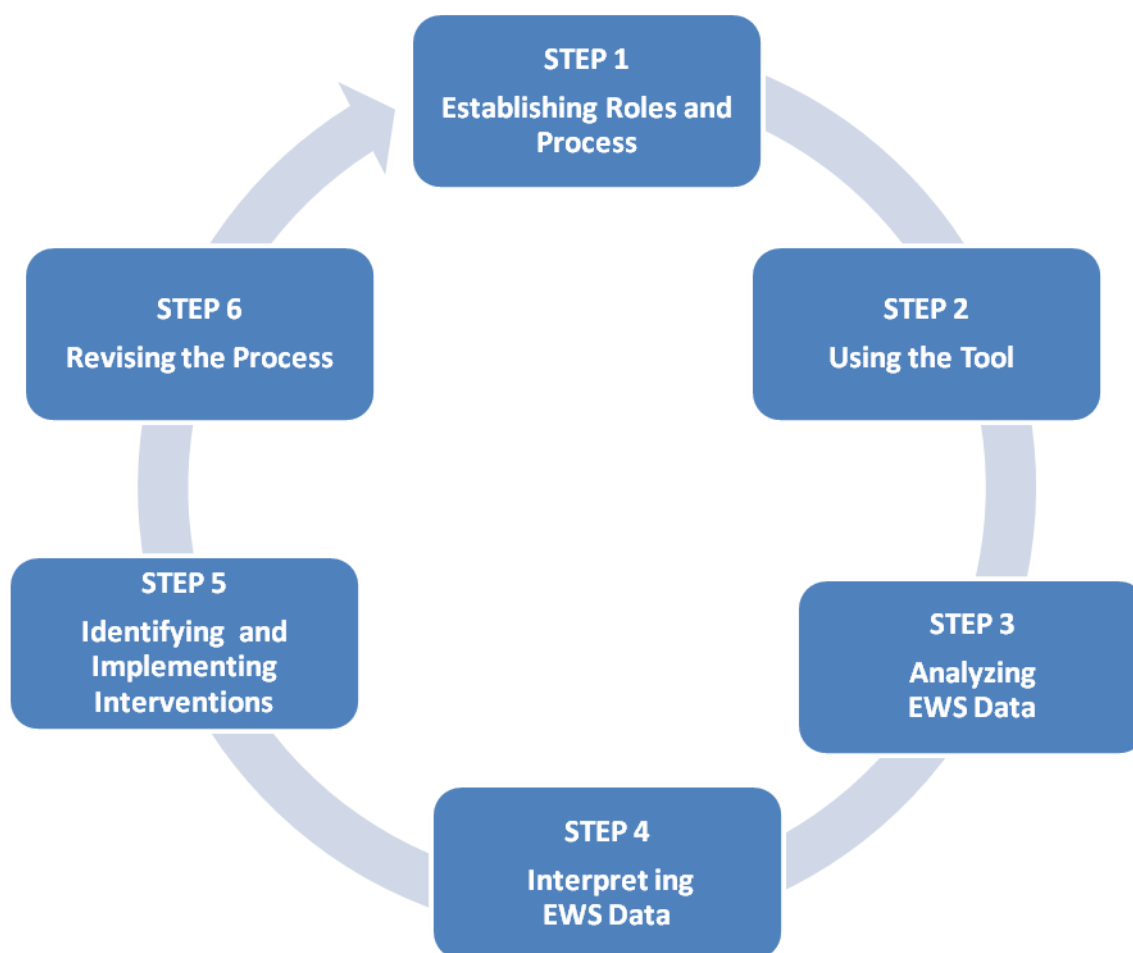
success; and student and parent engagement. It is expected that new users of the tool are ready to implement short-term strategies, and over time will be ready to delve into longer term strategies.

The appendices provide users with additional support and guidance. Appendix A provides supporting documentation for EWS users, and Appendix B provides an example of school implementation of EWS.

Conceptual Framework

As previously mentioned, the guide is divided into distinct implementation steps for users, but is intended to be cyclical in nature. Figure 1 illustrates the cycle. While the time-period of the cycle may be shorter than a school year, it is designed to be completed in the span of a single school year. The short- and long-term strategies should be reviewed regularly, and refined based on information and facts collected throughout the process.

Figure 1. **Cycle of the Early Warning System Tool Data Analysis**

STEP 1
Establishing Roles and Process

STEP 2
Using the Tool

STEP 3
Analyzing EWS Data

STEP 4
Interpret ing EWS Data

STEP 5
Identifying and Implementing Interventions

STEP 6
Revising the Process

Early warning systems are intended to provide information about students who are displaying risk factors that are linked to a likelihood of dropping out of high school. As a system, students can be

monitored throughout the course of the school year, and thus connected to preventative interventions before a student leaves school. Ideally, an early warning system allows administrators and educators in high schools and divisions to identify students with greater precision and in time to make decisions that can support them in getting back on-track for graduation. The guide provides information on how to implement each step, for an example of EWS implementation through these steps, please see Appendix B.

<u>Timeframe</u>

The Early Warning System tool data analysis process is cyclical and is designed to be carried out over the course of the academic year. Specific steps may be undertaken during defined periods of the year, many in a recurring or continuous manner, so that the process of collecting data, analyzing and interpreting it, and subsequently, defining appropriate strategies and interventions is always timely and responsive to emerging student needs. In the longer-term, the process allows for ongoing data-driven modification across academic years to ensure that the Early Warning System maintains both its efficiency and efficacy. Figure 2 provides an example of a schedule for implementing an EWS for incoming 9th graders.

Figure 2: Example Schedule for Implementing an Early Warning System for Incoming 9th Graders

SCHEDULE	STEPS
Summer before 9th grade year	- Form/designate an EWS team (STEP 1) - Upload Pre-High School data into the VEWS Tool (STEP 2) - Analyze and interpret student needs based on available data (STEPS 3 and 4) - Identify interventions for incoming ninth grade students after examining students' pre-high school indicators – which comprise the pre-high school indicator – or retained students' EWS data from the previous year (STEP 5)
At the beginning of 9th grade year:	- Convene the EWS Team (STEP 1) - Verify student data, especially enrollment information - Based on "summer before 9th grade year" and any additional information analyze and interpret student nees (STEPS 3 and 4) - Identify and implement incoming student interventions or supports for the transition into high school (STEP 5)
After the first 20 days of the 9th grade year	- Upload or enter student absences (STEP 2) - Analyze and interpret student- and school-level data (STEPS 3 & 4) - Identify, implement, and/or revise appropriate interventions (STEP 5)
After each grading period:	- Upload or enter student absences, course failures, and GPA (STEP 2) - Analyze and interpret student- and school-level data (STEPS 3 & 4) - Identify, implement, and/or revise appropriate interventions (STEP 5)
At the end of the school year:	- Upload or enter student absences, course failures, and GPA (STEP 2) - Analyze and interpret student- and school-level data (STEPS 3 & 4) - Identify, implement, and/or revise appropriate interventions (STEP 5) - Analyze results using student and school level reports (STEP 6) - Revise the process (STEP 6)

STEP 1 – Establishing Roles and Process

This section focuses on the types of people within the school and division that should come together to discuss early warning data. The EWS team may be established as a new team or may build on or be integrated into existing teams (e.g., school improvement team, response to intervention team, student support team, etc.). **It is not necessary to create an entirely new team for EWS work**, but an existing team that takes on the responsibility to use the tool for dropout prevention efforts and analyze the data to identify appropriate interventions for at-risk students must be sure to include a broad representation of leadership at the district and school level (e.g., principals, teachers, district administrators, specialists, etc.). Additionally, the EWS team must be allotted an adequate amount of time to devote to EWS work. Regardless of whether or not the EWS work is the responsibility of a new team or incorporated into the responsibilities of existing school teams, it is vital that the EWS work be the main priority of the designated team.

> *What You Need*
>
> - **Staff**
> - **Time allotment**
> - **Professional development/training (using the VA VEWS Tool)**

STEP 1 - Outcomes

1) Key staff are enlisted to participate on an EWS team
2) Team members establish a routine time to meet
3) Team members are trained on how to use and implement the VEWS Tool, including a person who regularly enters data into the tool
4) Team members understand their role and how to use the VEWS Tool

Size and Number of Teams

The size of the division dictates the number of EWS teams. For example, larger divisions that encompass several high schools may have teams at each school as well as at the division level. Smaller divisions with one high school may have a single team that includes a division representative and that is based at the school. At the very least there should be one school-level EWS team at each high school.

<u>EWS Team Meetings</u>

School-level teams are expected to meet regularly. The focus of these meetings is to discuss data from the tool as well as groups and individual students who have been identified as off-track for graduation. As mentioned previously, it may be practical to have a division administrator attend school-level team meetings in smaller divisions.

Division involvement and representation is critical to the successful implementation of EWS. In most cases, all school EWS teams should have at least one division personnel represented on the team. Note that if the division has many high schools, there should be a division team. This division representative will help the school team implement successful practices and strategies that other schools in the division are utilizing and maintain consistency in dropout prevention efforts across the division. In addition, the division team member can ensure that the proper resources are allocated to schools engaged in EWS work. In larger divisions, it may be necessary to have a division EWS team in addition to the school level teams. Division teams should be comprised of at least one key representative from each school-level team, and will meet less frequently, to discuss persistent problems/challenges, resources and strategies for supporting students, as well as systemic, organization and policy changes that may be necessary. The school-level representatives can help the division team come up with division-wide solutions for at-risk students (e.g., new behavioral management approaches or training for teachers and students, increased professional development in adolescent literacy, successful division-wide interventions for all tiers of students, etc.)

<u>EWS Team Guidelines</u>

The following are some guidelines for forming and maintaining an active school-level EWS team[2].

1) Teams should consist of personnel who have: authority to make decisions about staff and students and knowledge of diverse arrays of students. The following are some examples of staff who may be on the EWS team.
    a) The school principal or assistant principal responsible for making decisions about and assisting at-risk students should be present on all EWS teams.
    b) Staff from feeder middle schools in order to help ease the transition into high school.
    c) Guidance counselors
    d) Mathematics teachers
    e) English language arts teachers
    f) Special Education teachers
    g) English Language Learner instructors
    h) Division/Central office staff member
2) Teams must be given a regular, designated time to meet.
3) In alignment with the *Rapid Improvement School Indicators*, the EWS team must:

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[2] The Program Positioning System (PPS) is an online tool available to divisions and schools in Virginia, and may be helpful for maintaining EWS team information.

a) Have a written statement of purpose for their operation
b) Prepare agendas for each meeting
   i) Suggestions for regular agenda items include: a review of the data from the tool, actions taken for individual or groups of students, review of previous meetings action items (ongoing or completed), new action items, and communication with staff and leadership
c) Maintain minutes of meetings, including action items with individuals designated as responsible for accomplishing the action items
d) Provide agendas and minutes to the principal (to keep on file)
e) Communicate with leadership, staff, students, and parents.
   i) Provide regular updates to teachers about their students who are identified as off-track for graduation, as well as information about supports available to help them work with off-track students.
   ii) Provide regular information on students who are off-track for graduation, as well as students who get back on-track, to school leadership, staff, and parents.
   iii) Solicit feedback from administrators, teachers, staff, and students about potential underlying causes for students falling off-track, and obtain information about supports that may help these students get back on-track.
   iv) Annually present progress to the County Board of Public Instruction, Superintendent, and to the high school principal and staff.

STEP 1 - Division Role

As stated earlier, in most cases, at least one division representative should participate on the school EWS team. The role of the division is to identify system-wide concerns, and develop and recommend division-wide changes that address such concerns. Division administrators must communicate the importance of the EWS within a school through engagement, professional development, and monitoring of school level efforts such as:

- Engaging in school-level meetings or routinely communicating with EWS teams increases attention to the EWS efforts and signifies the importance of the EWS work.
- Providing professional development to team members for using the tool, and working with the school throughout the EWS process enhances the work of the team and decreases the variation in the quality of the EWS team's work.
- Monitoring school efforts to use EWS throughout the school year or in terms of outcome indicators such as the school transition indicator and school success report on an annual basis, again, signifies the importance of the EWS work, and allows the division to identify promising practices and areas of need in the division as a whole.

STEP 1 - Guiding Questions

Short-term strategies

- Who needs to be represented on the EWS team (e.g., division administrators, counselors, teachers, etc.)?
- How frequently and when will data be entered into the tool, and who will be responsible for entering it?
- How frequently and when should the EWS team meet?
- What resources could support the team?

Long-term strategies

- Who will continue to be part of the EWS team the following year? Some individuals should continue to serve on the team to ensure continuity over time.
- What are the most significant challenges facing the team?
- What are the most significant achievements?
- How can the process be improved?
- What, if any, additional resources are needed?

STEP 2 - Using the Tool

There are many ways to use the VEWS Tool. The key tasks are to maintain the data in the tool and provide information (e.g., student lists, reports) to the EWS Team so that the team is able to make informed decisions about students. Both tasks should be completed on a pre-established schedule.

Learning to use the VEWS Tool and the information the tool provides is fundamental to the EWS cycle. Each EWS team needs: 1) access to the VEWS Tool and student information necessary to use the tool; 2) team members who are trained to enter and upload information into the VEWS Tool; and 3) a timeline for ensuring data are entered and analyzed in a timely manner.

While it is important for all team members to understand how the tool works and the premise of the indicators, it is necessary that the EWS team designate one or more individual to take on the role of ensuring the data in the tool are current, and that the team is able to access the appropriate student and school-level reports based on the needs and priorities of the EWS Team. For example, if the EWS Team is meeting after the first month of school, the most current attendance data should be entered into the tool, and a report that identifies students who may be flagged for missing too many days during the first month of school should be ready to be shared with EWS Team members.

> ### What You Need
>
> - **VEWS Tool**
> - **Access to data and the tool information**
> - **Timeline for data entry**
> - **Data entry person and plan**

STEP 2 - Outcomes

1) All team members understand how the VEWS Tool is used
2) Data are regularly entered into the VEWS Tool based on the established team schedule. The team routinely meets to discuss the data in the tool (STEPS 3-5)

STEP 2- Division Role

Again, the division can support these efforts to use the VEWS Tool by:

- Providing professional development to team members in use of the VEWS Tool, and working with the school throughout the EWS process enhances the work of the team and decreases the variation in the quality of the EWS team's work.
- Aligning the division data systems and variables with the VEWS Tool data variables to streamline the efforts of the school EWS team, and allowing the team members to focus on supporting students, rather than managing data or having to double-enter information.

STEP 3 – Analyze EWS Data

STEP 3 is focused on guiding the EWS team as they analyze data and establish patterns in student performance, as well as gain a greater understanding of data analysis. This section focuses on the ways in which data from the tool may be examined. The goal of this section is to break down the extensive information the tool provides into manageable pieces of information that can be sorted, organized, and prioritized. The team should acknowledge that the indicators of risk are merely symptoms of deeper, and likely more complex problems. However, arranging the data in more manageable forms will allow the team members to develop questions raised by the data, and prioritize further investigation of the underlying causes for students being at-risk of being off-track for graduation, which will occur in STEP 4.

NOTE: APPENDIX A: Supporting Documents _Guide to Matching Students to Interventions (STEPS 3-5)_ provides a useful format for the EWS Team to follow.

> ### *What You Need*
>
> - **VEWS Tool with student data**
> - **VEWS Tool Student Reports**
> - **APPENDIX A:** *2. Guide to Matching Students to Interventions (STEPS 3-5)*
> - **EWS team meetings aligned with timing of student data entry**

STEP 3 - Outcomes

1) The team examines students who are flagged for attendance and course performance
2) Team members organize and sort at-risk students into groups based on their flagged indicators
3) The team identifies additional information or data needed to examine why specific students were flagged for particular indicators
4) Individual team members are assigned responsibilities for gathering the additional information and data regarding specific students and student characteristics

STEP 3 - Division Role

The data from the EWS teams has immediate implications for professionals and students in the schools; however, for individuals working at the division level, there is an opportunity to examine these data in terms of a whole school or the whole division. For example, are students who are at-risk of being off-track within the first semester coming from a particular school? If so, what seems to be the reason? The information from the EWS can be used to flag areas for further exploration and may impact how resources are allocated or how policies and strategies are implemented to focus on issues that are particular to students within the division.

STEP 3 - Guiding Questions

Short-term

- Based only on information from the VEWS Tool, what are the most prevalent indicators or symptoms among the students who are indentified as at risk for being off-track for graduation?
- Are there patterns among the students who are flagged for any Indicator(s) of Risk?
- Were students who are currently at-risk for being off-track for graduation also identified with a pre-high school alert, based off of feeder school data?
- What are the student information characteristics (e.g., NCLB/ESEA subgroups or other characteristics) of students identified as at-risk for being off-track for graduation?

- What questions are raised by observations of students identified as at-risk for being off-track for graduation? What data is needed to answer these questions? (These will guide you through STEP 4.)
    - In which classes or types of classes are groups of at-risk students enrolled (e.g. remedial reading or math courses)? Is it possible to group students by common needs (e.g., improving literacy) as opposed to common indicators or symptoms (e.g., failing English language arts)?
    - Are there any patterns in reasons for absence amongst students who are at-risk because of attendance flags?

STEP 4 – Interpret EWS Data

This section builds on the analysis from STEPS 2 and 3, by requiring the team to look deeper at the characteristics of students by finding and examining additional data that is not currently included in the VEWS Tool. The questions raised by observations of students identified as at-risk of being off-track for graduation during STEP 3 are more closely examined, based on the additional information gathered. This process will help the team uncover reasons as to why particular students are at-risk of being off-track. Importantly, users must openly discuss any previously held assumptions about individual or groups of students and move them aside, in place of factual evidence of underlying causes of poor performance. It is likely that the team will come up with new ideas as the underlying cause(s) for at-risk status is/are examined using data from the tool and additional information gathered. Based on these investigations, the team should be able to identify some common and individual needs among students, and prepare to identify appropriate intervention strategies (STEP 5).

NOTE: APPENDIX A: Supporting Documents _Guide to Matching Students to Interventions (STEPS 3-5)_ provides a useful format for the EWS Team to follow.

> **_What You Need_**
>
> - A list of questions raised by the data analysis during STEP 3
> - Additional data/information
> - APPENDIX A: _2. Guide to Matching Students to Interventions (STEPS 3-5)_
> - Time to meet and discuss findings

STEP 4 - Outcomes

1) The team examines additional data in conjunction with data from the VEWS Tool to better understand reasons why groups of students may be at-risk of being off-track for graduation.
2) Based on these analyses, the team decides if there are any new questions that arise as to the underlying causes of students' at-risk status. These questions may require additional data (returning to Step 3).
3) The team identifies individual and common needs among students.

STEP 4 - Division Role

Interpreting the EWS data requires access to student records. Division administrators can support these efforts by developing policies that give EWS team members access to student information so that they are able to make informed decisions about student needs. This may require information from earlier grades and schools, state testing results (pre-high school), etc.

STEP 4 - Guiding Questions

Short-term

- How has the additional information informed the questions raised in STEP 3? Are there new questions that arise during this analysis? Does the additional information change how students are grouped or what patterns are evident in the data?
- What are the most prominent needs based on your analysis of the data? At the school level? Division? How do you prioritize these needs?
- Based on your analyses, is there anyone who is not currently on the EWS team who needs to be at the table to discuss these students (previous teachers, parents, guidance counselors, curriculum and instruction personnel, etc.)?
- Can more information be gathered from students as to the reasons for why they are exhibiting behaviors causing them to be at-risk for being off-track for graduation in a non-threatening manner (e.g. students find classes disengaging; students have responsibilities at home causing them to be absent)?

Long-term

- Are there recommendations for preventative strategies to support students who may be at-risk?
- What additional stakeholders should be included in discussions (e.g., community members, law enforcement representatives, court representatives, human services representatives, business representatives, local policymakers, parents, teachers, students, guidance counselors, central office staff, etc.) regarding how to systematically address the identified issues that are causing students to be off-track for graduation?

- o How will they be engaged? How will buy-in be promoted? What results can each audience achieve?
- What additional data were important to identifying underlying causes? What additional data is necessary? What data was difficult to obtain? How could it be made more accessible?
- For students who do not graduate on time, why did they drop out?
  - o Does the division have the capacity and resources needed to locate and survey or interview these students?

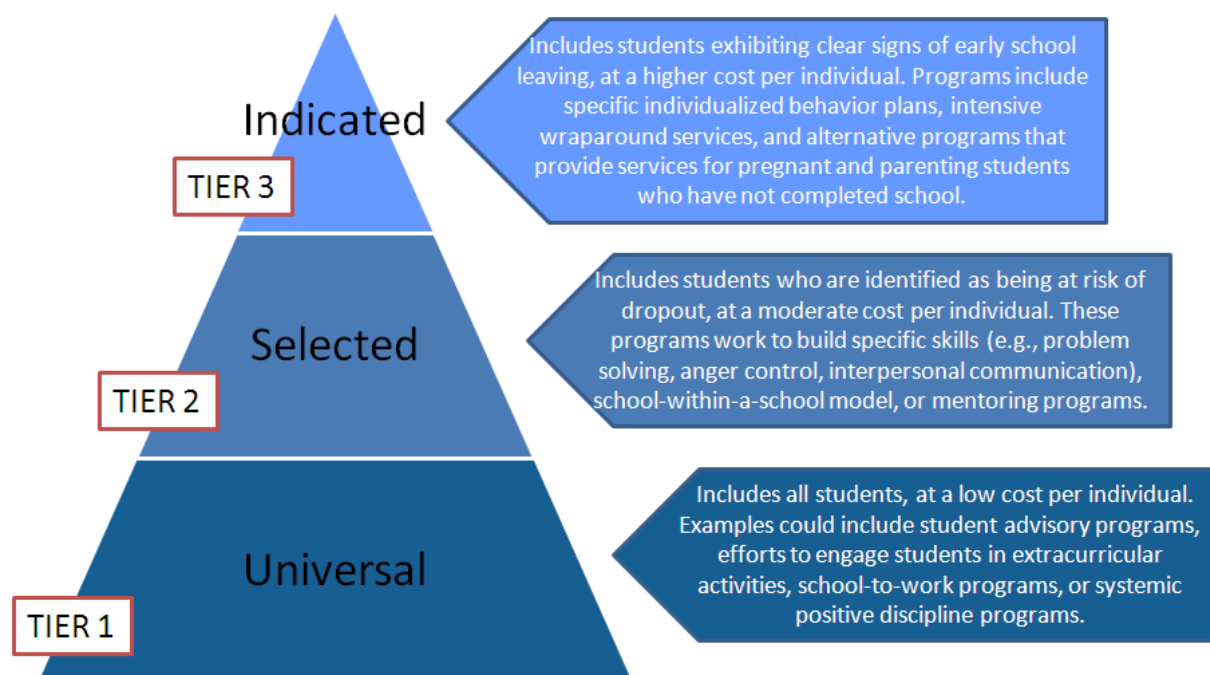## STEP 5 – Identify and Implement Interventions

This section includes information about short- and long-term strategies for individuals within the divisions and high schools who are making informed decisions about available resources and strategies to support students identified as off-track for graduation. Guidance on ways to systemically approach support for students off-track for graduation is presented and a tiered approach is discussed. Lastly, the guiding questions provide basic direction for monitoring the use of these resources and strategies, so that future decisions about interventions and supports are informed by the successes and failures of previous interventions.

NOTE: APPENDIX A: *1. Dropout Prevention Mapping* and *2. Guide to Matching Students to Interventions (STEPS 3-5)* support the EWS Team during STEP 5.

> **What You Need**
>
> - **An understanding of student needs in the school, by priority, based on EWS and other data analysis**
> - **APPENDIX A *1. Dropout Prevention Mapping* and *2. Guide to Matching Students to Interventions (STEPS 3-5)***
> - **Leadership buy-in and support for interventions and strategies to assist at-risk students**

Dropout prevention models have been developed that organize specific strategies or programs into tiers based on intensity of the interventions. Generally, the models have a two- or three-tiered intervention system in which level 1 addresses all students, level 2 addresses small groups of students with common needs (sometimes individual students) with moderately intensive interventions, and level 3 addresses individual students with the most intensive interventions.

Indicated — TIER 3: Includes students exhibiting clear signs of early school leaving, at a higher cost per individual. Programs include specific individualized behavior plans, intensive wraparound services, and alternative programs that provide services for pregnant and parenting students who have not completed school.

Selected — TIER 2: Includes students who are identified as being at risk of dropout, at a moderate cost per individual. These programs work to build specific skills (e.g., problem solving, anger control, interpersonal communication), school-within-a-school model, or mentoring programs.

Universal — TIER 1: Includes all students, at a low cost per individual. Examples could include student advisory programs, efforts to engage students in extracurricular activities, school-to-work programs, or systemic positive discipline programs.

When adopting or adapting such a model, a division or school may consider the following:

1. The purpose of a tiered dropout prevention program should be explicit with buy-in at multiple levels from state and local education agencies to families and students.

2. The tiers within the model need to be clearly defined and easily understood by all stakeholders, including administrators, educators, families, school support staff, and students.

3. A protocol needs to be established enabling students to move through the tiers seamlessly and efficiently as needs are identified or change based on data garnered through initial screening or continual progress monitoring.

Guidelines for Identifying and Monitoring Intervention Resources

A. Conduct an inventory of existing interventions and student supports within the division and school.
   i. What needs do the interventions purport to address? What are the characteristics of the students who are best suited to these interventions?
   ii. Are they successful? How do you know? What data demonstrates success?
   iii. Identify if any of the students who have been identified as off-track for graduation are participating in these interventions or receiving these supports. What is the duration? Intensity? Fidelity of implementation (is the intervention being implemented as designed)? What indicators or success, or lack of success, are documented in student records?

B. Based on the student needs identified in STEP 4, match existing interventions and supports to that have proven effective to students by need and appropriateness of fit. If possible, assign off-track students who are not currently receiving supports to existing interventions/supports that have proven effective and that have the potential to meet their needs.

C. Identify student needs that are not being met. These needs may be for students who are receiving supports but who are still off-track for graduation. These needs may also have been addressed by interventions that have not proven effective, or they may be needs for which no current intervention has been implemented. Explore new interventions or strategies that may meet the needs of these students.

  i.   Identify strategies as well as programs.

  ii.   Develop a list with associated costs (resources, financial, staff time).

  iii. Select appropriate interventions with input from leadership and staff.

D. Attain approval and support for additional and/or replacement interventions as needed.

E. Implement interventions.

F. Track and evaluate the process and outcomes of the supports/interventions/strategies.

G. Discuss and reflect on supports/interventions/resources and refine and reorganize as needed.

H. Solicit parental involvement in the process and communicate effectively and often with the home.

STEP 5 - Outcomes

1) The team compiles an inventory of interventions (at both the school and division levels) available to students

2) The team identifies gaps in the available interventions for students, and makes recommendations for new intervention strategies and prioritizing new interventions based on EWS data

3) The team develops school-wide intervention strategies aimed at addressing the most common student need identified in STEPS 3 & 4

4) The team identifies one-on-one supports for students with individual or unique needs

5) The team monitors student progress in the interventions and makes decisions about when a student is no longer at-risk of being off-track for graduation

6) The team monitors students and interventions to make determinations about the effectiveness of interventions

STEP 5 - Division Role

The perspective of the division allows for more systemic analysis and longer term solutions and strategies. Thus, a division can support EWS teams in identifying appropriate interventions by

1) Identifying common needs among schools and allocating resources accordingly;

2) Identifying division-wide solutions for common needs among schools; and

3) Supporting pre-high school interventions when possible to improve student outcomes (e.g., elementary and middle-grade interventions, summer bridge programs, etc.).

Divisions also have a role to play in facilitating the use of promising interventions. Not only can divisions support the EWS team to identify promising student interventions, but they can also help the high school to validate interventions by examining student outcomes. Last, in those divisions with multiple high schools, administrators can examine the student interventions that led to students getting back on track for graduation, and subsequently share these practices with other schools in the division that have similar needs.

Guiding Questions

Short-term – Identify Appropriate Interventions

- What interventions are currently implemented in the school(s) and/or division? How successful are they? What type of ongoing support is provided to implement interventions with fidelity? What data is collected about the impact of interventions?
- What structures currently exist to support students who are off-track for graduation (e.g., flexible scheduling, summer school, credit recovery, behavior support, attendance and truancy interventions, etc.)?
- Do trends in the data identify the need for particular types of interventions (e.g., professional development for teachers on instructional strategies, ninth-grade transition supports, opportunities for extended learning beyond the school day, etc.)?
- Is it possible to provide supports that are tiered by intensity based on student need? (If possible, identify the most critical issue on which to focus efforts.)
- How do the characteristics of the student cohort inform our intervention decisions?
- How will you identify promising interventions to match the critical issue(s) (e.g., attend conferences, purchase intervention, ask/visit other schools/divisions, study teams, review literature, seek help from regional or state agencies)?
- What resources (time, materials, personnel, funding) are necessary to support the critical issue(s)? What resources are available to support the identified students? If not sufficient, how will you obtain additional resources to address the critical issue(s) (e.g., cost-sharing across programs, grants, other funding sources)? How will the resources be distributed among groups and individual students based on their needs?
- How will school/division staff be included as part of these efforts? How will this information be communicated to them? How will they be involved in decision making, implementation, and monitoring?

Long-term – Implement and Evaluate Interventions

- Do trends in the data consistently identify the need for similar types of interventions?
- How will you monitor the fidelity of implementation of identified interventions? How will you evaluate its impact? How will this data be communicated back to the EWS team?

- Did the targeted students get back on-track? Which indicators provide evidence that students are back on track? (e.g., did their attendance rates go up? Did course performance improve)? How will this data be collected and communicated back to the EWS team?
- What interventions appeared to be most successful to the identified critical needs?
- How will you communicate the results of this work to critical stakeholders (e.g., parents and students, teachers, administrators, community, other educators outside of your division, VDOE)?
- As interventions are implemented, do new needs arise? Has the frequency of which students are flagged for each indicator changed since new strategies have been put in place? How can interventions be modified or replaced?
- What policies need to be in place to improve the implementation of dropout prevention strategies?
- Were the resources sufficient to implement the identified interventions? If not, how might additional resources be identified for both the short- and long-term?
- Are there organizational or structural changes that are needed in the school or division to support students?
- How will the successes of the program and individual students be celebrated?

STEP 6 – Collect Data, Analyze, Revise

On an annual basis (at a minimum) the EWS team should reflect upon the Early Warning System tool data analysis process (Figure 1). Namely, the Team should discuss what has worked, what may need to be modified, and what may need to be replaced or eliminated. Each decision should be supported by data and evidence and documented in a formal report to the county board, superintendent, and high school principal(s).

> **What You Need**
>
> - **VEWS Tool reports**
> - **Time to consider and identify ways to improve the EWS process**

STEP 6 - Outcomes

1) The team makes recommendations for improving the EWS process
2) The new team members are identified and enlisted
3) New team members have a clear understanding of the process for the upcoming year, including their roles

STEP 6 - Division Role

Step 6 is when the central office has the opportunity to monitor the EWS outcomes in divisions and schools. To do so, there should be a mechanism or mechanisms (e.g., evaluation plans)through which divisions and schools can evaluate the outcomes through the course of the year and at the end of the year. For example, a division may informally get this information by participating in the EWS team and more formally, by requiring a school to report the results of the EWS annually to the division administrators and/or the local school board.

The division administrators should participate in the process of refining the EWS process. There may be particular issues or challenges that can be easily resolved by division administrators. The division administrators may help to schools improve the EWS process by linking and sharing struggles and successes of the EWS process across the division. For example, a division may be able to easily develop student reports that help the EWS team make decisions about student interventions or validate the EWS indicators. A division team member may also be able to assist in planning for professional development opportunities for staff and teachers division-wide that need more training on the EWS process to increase the effectiveness of EWS efforts.

STEP 6 - Guiding Questions

Indicators and Strategies

- Based on evidence, are there any indicators that seem to be better at identifying students who are falling off-track (higher yield indicators)? If some indicators are more predictive than others, consider monitoring them in the VEWS Tool.
- What existing or newly implemented interventions for students who were identified as at-risk for being off-track for graduation ensured that these students got back on-track, or are headed in that direction?
- What needs are not being addressed by current interventions to support students in getting back on-track for graduation?
- Are there any policies, organizational systems, or educational approaches at the school and/or division level that may need to be revised to ensure students are able to get back on-track for graduation?
- When comparing the current data with analyses of previous cohorts of students, can the school or division validate the EWS indicators of risk? Are the indicator thresholds (e.g., 10% of days missed) appropriate? Should they be adjusted? How many or what percentage of

students who were identified as being on-track did not graduate with their cohort or dropped out? How many or what percentage of students who were identified as being off-track did graduate on time? If trends are apparent in the division or individual school, do the trends continue over time?

- Are there groups of students who are consistently identified as off-track for graduation across cohorts (i.e. subgroups within the groups of off-track students who did not graduate but should have in 2008, 2007, etc.)?
- How can the tool be improved and kept valid, including enhancing the reports, adding additional evidence-based indicators, adjusting indicator thresholds, etc.?
- Are there systemic problems in the division or school (e.g., risk factors that are prevalent from year-to-year, feeder patterns, schools with persistent problems, groups of students who are consistently identified)?

Other

- What did you like about the VEWS Tool? Process? Team? Other?
- Were there any unintended (negative or positive) consequences of the EWS process? Tool? Intervention strategies? Other?
    o What changes would you recommend?
- How do students and parents rate its effectiveness? Do they have suggestions for improvement?

EWS Team

- What were the biggest challenges the team faced? Biggest successes?
- What made your job easier or more difficult as the year progressed? What changes could make your job easier next year?
- What recommendations for the next year's EWS team do you have?
    o How frequently should the EWS team meet?
    o Who should continue to be on the EWS team? [Note: There should be some individuals who overlap from year to year to ensure continuity over time.] What specific members or roles need to maintain representation on the EWS team (e.g., division administrator, principal, counselor, teacher, etc.)? Who could leave?
    o How much time in meetings and out of meetings do individual members need?
    o What additional resources could support the team?

Conclusion

The 6-step EWS process provides an organizing framework for schools and divisions to use in planning for dropout prevention efforts. The steps guide users in using data about specific students to plan for individualized and indicated interventions for students at-risk of dropping out of high school. It provides

various ways to think about the data and group and interpret it in ways that may reveal underlying systemic school and division issues that can be improved to keep students in school. The steps also specify roles for personnel at both the school and division levels in order to create and maintain organized and comprehensive approaches to dropout prevention. Using the guiding questions and frameworks presented will help initiate the significant and important dropout prevention process integral to keeping students in school and support efforts to identify the most promising interventions in specific schools and divisions.

APPENDIX A:
Supporting Documents

1. **DROPOUT PREVENTION INTERVENTION MAPPING**
2. **GUIDE TO MATCHING STUDENTS TO INTERVENTIONS (STEPS 3-5)**

DROPOUT PREVENTION INTERVENTION MAPPING

Directions: _List the existing dropout prevention interventions/strategies in your school or division in column 1. In columns 2 and 3, use the codes to indicate which best captures the intervention. In columns 4-16, mark an "X" in the column(s) that the intervention addresses._

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
School/Division: _____ **Date:** _____ _____	Tier (1= Universal, 2=Targeted, 3=Individualized)	A=Attendance B=Behavioral, AC=Academic	Focus on achievement in core courses	Content recovery courses	Tiered approaches	Tutoring as an academic support	Attendance and behavior monitors	Advisories and team teaching	Counseling and mentoring	Personalization (e.g., Small learning communities)	Partnerships between high schools and feeder middle schools	Ninth grade transition programs	Support for students with disabilities outside of school	Career and college awareness	Family engagement
Example: Virginia Ninth Grade Transition Initiative	1	B, AC	X									X			

GUIDE TO MATCHING STUDENTS TO INTERVENTIONS (STEPS 3-5)

Directions: _The table guides VEWS Tool users through STEPS 3 (analysis), 4 (interpretation), and 5(interventions) of the EWS Cycle, in order to match at-risk students to appropriate interventions._ _SEE EXAMPLE X_

STEP 3 – Analyzing EWS Data						STEP 4 – Interpreting EWS Data		STEP 5 – Identifying and Implementing Interventions				
Guiding Questions	_Observations_	_What questions are raised by observations?_	_What data is needed to answer questions?_	_How could that data be obtained?_	_Who will obtain the data?_	_How has the additional information informed the questions raised?_	_What needs do analyses indicate?_	_Intervention_	_Existing or New?_	_Target Audience (grade, content area, gender, etc.)_	_Resources Required (Time, Staffing, Other)_	_Evidence of Effectiveness_

APPENDIX B:
EXAMPLE

- EXAMPLE –

6-STEP EWS Implementation Cycle

The following is an EXAMPLE of how an EWS Team moves through each STEP of the EWS Implementation Cycle. It is only an example, and serves to improve understanding of EWS.

STEP 1 – Establishing Roles and Process

✓ *Who needs to be represented on the EWS team (e.g., division administrators, counselors, teachers, etc.)?*

- o The school principal
- o Assistant principal responsible who deals with disciplinary actions
- o Guidance counselors
- o Math Department Chair
- o English/Language Arts Department Chair
- o Science Department Chair
- o Social Studies Department Chair
- o Special Education teachers
- o Division/Central office staff member

✓ *How frequently and when will data be entered into the tool, and who will be responsible for entering it?*

- o Data will be entered into the system before ninth grade (whatever relevant feeder school data is obtained), after the first 20 days of school, and at the end of each grading period.
- o The guidance department will be responsible for entering data into the tool

✓ *How frequently and when should the EWS team meet?*

- o The EWS team will meet before the start of the school year, and once a month to discuss new student needs and progress.

✓ *What resources could support the team?*

- o Staff time to complete this work

o   Professional development around EWS and to identify, implement and evaluate
    interventions for students

STEP 2 - Using the Tool

Step 2 requires that the EWS team member responsible for entering data into the tool completes this task so that the team can analyze and discuss the data later.

The Student Performance Data sheet below shows student data for grading period one.

Student ID	Last Name	First Name	Pre-HS indicator	First 20 day absences	Total absences	Courses failed (all)	Courses failed (core)	Credits earned	GPA
			Pre-High School			**Grading period 1**			
101	Joseph	Nelson	ON TRACK	0	0	0	0	4	3
102	Lauren	Kelly	OFF TRACK	4	8	2	2	1	1.8
103	Greta	Adams	ON TRACK	0	2	1	1	2.5	2.5
104	Mimi	Cao	ON TRACK	2	4	1	0	2.5	2.5
105	Jennifer	Dunn	OFF TRACK	2	6	1	1	2.5	2.4
106	Kimberly	Eaton	OFF TRACK	1	4	0	0	3	4
107	Sharon	Fanning	OFF TRACK	0	0	0	0	3	3.5
108	Ginger	Gattis	OFF TRACK	0	0	0	0	3	2.9
109	Christopher	Hahn	ON TRACK	2	4	0	0	3	3.1
110	Robert	Ivry	ON TRACK	0	0	2	1	1	1.2

STEP 3 – Analyze EWS Data

The Indicator Flags Report below lists all of the students' flags for the pre-high school indicator and the indicators of risk for grading period one. Six students have been identified as at-risk for being off-track for graduation (noted with red highlighting) based on having one or more flags for the Indicators of Risk.

				Pre-High School	Grading period 1			
Student ID	First Name	Last Name		Pre-HS indicator	First 20 day attendance	GP1 attendance	Course fails	GPA
101	Joseph	Nelson		On Track	No	No	No	No
102	Lauren	Kelly		Off Track	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
103	Greta	Adams		On Track	No	No	Yes	No
104	Mimi	Cao		On Track	Yes	No	Yes	No
105	Jennifer	Dunn		Off Track	Yes	No	Yes	No
106	Kimberly	Eaton		Off Track	No	No	No	No
107	Sharon	Fanning		Off Track	No	No	No	No
108	Ginger	Gattis		Off Track	No	No	No	No
109	Christopher	Hahn		On Track	Yes	No	No	No
110	Robert	Ivry		On Track	No	No	Yes	Yes
					--	--	--	--

The Flagged Student Report for Semester 1 below lists only the six students identified as at-risk for being off-track for graduation, as well as each of their flags for the Indicators of Risk. The EWS Team can use this report to analyze the data, organize and sort students into groups based on their flagged indicators, and identify additional information needed to examine why specific students are flagged for particular indicators.

Student Level Report

Report:	Flagged student report
Time frame:	Semester 1
Date:	Wednesday, April 28, 2010

Student ID	First Name	Last Name	Pre-HS indicator	GP1_First 20 Day Attendance	GP1_Attendance	GP1_Course Fails	GP1_GPA
102	Lauren	Kelly	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
103	Greta	Adams	No	No	No	Yes	No
104	Mimi	Cao	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
105	Jennifer	Dunn	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
109	Christopher	Hahn	No	Yes	No	No	No
110	Robert	Ivry	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

✓ *Based on only information from the VEWS Tool, what are the most prevalent indicators or symptoms among the students who are indentified as at risk for being off-track for graduation?*

   o Among the six students who are at risk for being off track for graduation:

- 4 students are flagged for Grading Period 1 First 20 Day Attendance (Students 102, 104, 105, and 109)

- 0 students are flagged for Grading Period 1 Attendance

- 5 students are flagged for Grading Period 1 Course Fails (Students 102, 103, 104, 105, and 110)

- 2 students are flagged for Grading Period 1 GPA (Students 102 and 110)

  o It appears that the most prevalent symptoms among these students are:

  - Grading Period 1 First 20 Day Attendance (Students 102, 104, 105, and 109)

  - Grading Period 1 Course Fails (Students 102, 103, 104, 105, and 110)

✓ *Are there patterns among the students who are flagged for any Indicator(s) of Risk?*

  o Three of the four students flagged for Grading Period 1 First 20 Day Attendance were also flagged for Grading Period 1 Course Fails (Students 102, 104, and 105)

  o None of the students flagged for Grading Period 1 First 20 Day Attendance were also flagged for Grading Period 1 Attendance.

  o One student is at risk of being off-track for graduation due only to Grading Period 1 First 20 Day Attendance (Student 109).

  o The two students flagged for Grading Period 1 GPA were also flagged for Grading Period 1 Course Fails (Students 102 and 110).

  o Based on these patterns, it appears that poor attendance during the first 20 days does not predict future attendance problems during semester 1, although several of these students failed at least one course. Poor performance in courses during semester 1 does not necessarily correspond with overall low GPA; however, students who have low GPAs also frequently fail courses.

✓ *Were students who are currently at-risk for being off-track for graduation also identified with a pre-high school alert, based off of feeder school data?*

  o Two of the six currently at-risk students were also flagged for the pre-high school indicator (Students 102 and 105).

  o The Indicator Flags Report shows that three of the students flagged for the pre-high school indicator are not currently identified as at-risk for being off-track for graduation (Students 106, 107, and 108).

✓ *What are the student information characteristics (e.g., NCLB/ESEA subgroups or other characteristics) of students identified as at-risk for being off-track for graduation?*

The three Student Characteristics Reports below list the students identified as at-risk for being off-track for graduation sorted by the following characteristics: students with disabilities, English language learner (ELL) students, and economically disadvantaged students. These reports also list each of the students' flags for the Indicators of Risk.

		Student Level Report							
Main menu		Student Level Report			Reports Control Panel				
Report:	Student characteristics: Disabilities				Flagged stude	0			
Time frame:	Semester 1				Total students	0			
Date:	Wednesday, April 28, 2010				%	0%			
Student ID	First Name	Last Name	Disability	GP1_First 20 Day Attendance	GP1_Attendance	GP1_Course Fails	GP1_GPA	GP1 Interventions	

		Student Level Report							
Main menu		Student Level Report			Reports Control Panel				
Report:	Student characteristics: ELL students				Flagged stude	0			
Time frame:	Semester 1				Total students	0			
Date:	Wednesday, April 28, 2010				%	0%			
Student ID	First Name	Last Name	ELL status	GP1_First 20 Day Attendance	GP1_Attendance	GP1_Course Fails	GP1_GPA	GP1 Interventions	

		Student Level Report							
Main menu		Student Level Report			Reports Control Panel				
Report:	Student characteristics: Disadvantaged students				Flagged stude	4			
Time frame:	Semester 1				Total students	6			
Date:	Wednesday, April 28, 2010				%	67%			
Student ID	First Name	Last Name	Disadvantaged	GP1_First 20 Day Attendance	GP1_Attendance	GP1_Course Fails	GP1_GPA	GP1 Interventions	
103	Greta	Adams	Y	No	No	Yes	No	--	
104	Mimi	Cao	y	Yes	No	Yes	No	--	
105	Jennifer	Dunn	y	Yes	No	Yes	No	--	
109	Christopher	Hahn	y	Yes	No	No	No	--	

- None of the at-risk students are identified as having as a disability.

- None of the at-risk students are identified as being English language learners (ELL).Four of the six at-risk students are economically disadvantaged (students 103, 104, 105, and 109). All of these students are flagged for either or both indicators of Grading Period 1 First 20 Day Attendance and Grading Period 1 Course Fails.

✓ *What questions are raised by observations of students identified as at-risk for being off-track for graduation? What data is needed to answer these questions?*

- What are common reasons that students are absent during the first 20 days (i.e., illness, family vacation, truancy, etc.)? Are there any common reasons for absence amongst students who are at-risk for being off-track for graduation because of attendance?

  - Data needed: Reasons for student absences; school attendance policy

- o In which classes or types of classes are groups of at-risk students flagged for Grading Period 1 Course Fails enrolled (e.g. remedial reading or math courses)? Is it possible to group students by common needs (e.g., improving literacy) as opposed to common indicators or symptoms (e.g., failing English language arts)?

  - ▪ Data needed: Classes students failed

- o What is the relationship between Grading Period 1 First 20 Day Attendance and Grading Period 1 Course Fails?

  - ▪ Data needed: Student attendance records and grade reports; school attendance policy related to course attendance

- o What is the relationship between Grading Period 1 GPA and Grading Period 1 Course Fails?

  - ▪ Data needed: Student grade reports

- o Are these students struggling with the same indicators as they were pre-high school?

  - ▪ Data needed: Student EWS indicators and medical and family issues

- o Is there a particular subgroup that is being disproportionately represented? Did the pattern change from the feeder school?

  - ▪ Data needed: Demographic information from feeder schools

Guiding Questions	Observations	What questions are raised by observations?	What data is needed to answer questions?	How could that data be obtained?	Who will obtain the data?
What are the most prevalent indicators or "symptoms" among the students who are at-risk?	Most prevalent symptoms appear to be: • Grading Period 1 First 20 Day Attendance (Students 102, 104, 105, and 109) • Grading Period 1 Course Fails (Students 102, 103, 104, 105, and 110)	Why were these students absent in the first 20 days? Are there common reasons?	Reasons for student absences School attendance policy	Records for absences and attendance policy information from attendance officer	Attendance Officer
		What classes are these students failing?	Classes students failed	Student grade reports	Guidance counselor
Are there patterns among the students who are flagged for any Indicator(s) of Risk?	Three of the four students flagged for Grading Period 1 First 20 Day Attendance were also flagged for Grading Period 1 Course Fails (Students 102,	What is the relationship between first 20 day attendance and course failures?	Student attendance records and grade reports School attendance policy related to course	Attendance is in the VEWS Tool Course grades are in the school's guidance office Attendance policy	Attendance Officer and Guidance office

Guiding Questions	Observations	What questions are raised by observations?	What data is needed to answer questions?	How could that data be obtained?	Who will obtain the data?
	104, and 105)		attendance	information from attendance officer	
	The two students flagged for Grading Period 1 GPA were also flagged for Grading Period 1 Course Fails (Students 102 and 110)	What is the relationship between GPA and course failures?	Student grade reports	Course grades are in the school's guidance office	Guidance office
Were currently at-risk students also flagged for the pre-high school indicator?	Two of the currently at-risk students were also flagged for the pre-high school indicator (Students 102 and 105)	Are these students struggling with the same indicators as they were pre-high school?	Student EWS indicators and medical and family issues	Last three years of student records and anecdotal data from current and previous staff; data from other agencies	Student Assistance Team
What are the student information characteristics of students identified as at-risk?	Four of the at-risk students are economically disadvantaged (students 103, 104, 105, and 109). All of these students are flagged for either or both indicators of Grading Period 1 First 20 Day Attendance and Grading Period 1 Course Fails	Is there a particular subgroup that is being disproportionately represented? Did the pattern change from the feeder school?	Demographic information from feeder schools	Feeder school records	Principal or designee of all schools involved

STEP 4 – Interpret EWS Data

Based on the data gathered and questions raised in Step 3, the EWS team can move forward in interpreting the EWS data to identify underlying causes of display indicators of risk.

 ✓ *How has the additional information informed the questions raised in STEP 3?*

- o What are common reasons that students are absent during the first 20 days? Are there any common reasons for absence amongst students who are at-risk for being off-track for graduation because of attendance?

    - Two of these students (Student IDs 4 and 9) were ill and had excused absences from school.

    - Two of these students (Student IDs 2 and 5) had unexcused absences and were truant.

- o In which classes or types of classes are groups of at-risk students for being off-track for graduation who are flagged for Course Fs enrolled? Is it possible to group students by common needs as opposed to common indicators or symptoms?

    - All of the students flagged for course Fs are failing Algebra I and Geometry.

- o What is the relationship between First 20 day Count Attendance and Course Fs?

    - Two of the students flagged for both attendance and course Fs are failing because of lost instruction on fundamental topics covered at the beginning of the semester during absences (Student IDs 4, 5).

    - The school's attendance policy related to course absences states that, in each academic course, if a student misses three or more class periods due to either excused or unexcused absences, he or she automatically fails the course. One student (Student ID 2) missed enough days to automatically fail under the school's attendance policy.

- o What is the relationship between GPA and Course Fs?

    - Student IDs 2 and 11 failed enough courses to bring their GPAs below the indicator thresholds for being at-risk of being off-track.

- o Are students identified with a pre-high school alert struggling with the same indicators as they were pre-high school?

    - Both of these students (Student IDs 2 and 5) had problems with attendance and course failures pre-high school as well as this semester. Both students had more than three absences and/or failing grades in core courses during at least one grading period in 8th grade.

- o Is there a particular subgroup that is being disproportionately represented? Did the pattern change from the feeder school?

    - No subgroups are disproportionately represented and patterns are the same from feeder schools.

- ✓ *Are there new questions that arise during this analysis?*

    - o Have there been any recent changes in the day-to-day operation of the school that could be affecting student performance (e.g., bus schedules, activities offered, class schedule changes, etc.)?

    - o Are there any underlying school climate issues that may be causing students to disengage from school?

- ✓ *Does the additional information change how students are grouped or what patterns are evident in the data?*

    - o No, the groupings stay the same.

_____

- ✓ *What are the most prominent needs based on your analysis of the data? At the school level? Division? How do you prioritize these needs?*

    - o

- ✓ *Based on your analyses, is there anyone who is not currently on the EWS team who needs to be at the table to discuss these students (previous teachers, parents, guidance counselors, curriculum and instruction personnel, etc.)?*

    - o Feeder middle school mathematics department chairs will be invited to join the EWS Team to help track and support students struggling with math content. Additional high school mathematics teachers will be added to the EWS team as well.

- ✓ *Can more information be gathered from students as to the reasons for why they are exhibiting behaviors causing them to be at-risk for being off-track for graduation in a non-threatening manner (e.g. students find classes disengaging; students have responsibilities at home causing them to be absent)?*

    - o No further information was obtained from the students.

From STEP 3			*How has the additional information informed the questions raised?*	*What needs do analyses indicate?*
Guiding Questions	*Observations*	*What questions are raised by observations?*		
What are the most prevalent indicators or "symptoms" among the students who are at-risk?	Most prevalent symptoms appear to be: • Grading Period 1 First 20 Day Attendance (Students 102, 104, 105, and 109)	Why were these students absent in the first 20 days? Are there common reasons?	Two of these students (Student IDs 102 and 105) had unexcused absences and were truant. Two of these students (Students 104 and 109) were ill and had excused absences from school.	The truant students need support and encouragement to attend school.
	• Grading Period 1 Course Fails (Students 102, 103, 104, 105, and 110)	What classes are these students failing?	All of the students flagged for course failures are failing Algebra I and Geometry.	These students need additional mathematics instruction support.
Are there patterns among the students who are flagged for any Indicator(s) of Risk?	Three of the four students flagged for Grading Period 1 First 20 Day Attendance were also flagged for Grading Period 1 Course Fails (Students 102, 104, and 105)	What is the relationship between first 20 day attendance and course failures?	Two of the students flagged for both attendance and course failures are failing because of lost instruction on fundamental topics covered during their absences at the beginning of the semester (Students 104 and 105). One student (Student 102) missed enough days	These students need extra support and perhaps additional instruction to learn missed content due to early absences in the school year and not fall further behind. This student may need an opportunity

			to automatically fail under the school's attendance policy.	to recover the lost credits in order to not fall further behind.
	The two students flagged for Grading Period 1 GPA were also flagged for Grading Period 1 Course Fails (Students 102 and 110)	What is the relationship between GPA and course failures?	Students 102 and 110 failed enough courses to bring their GPAs below the indicator thresholds for being at-risk of being off-track.	These students need extra instruction and support in the content in which they are struggling.
Were currently at-risk students also flagged for the pre-high school indicator?	Two of the currently at-risk students were also flagged with the pre-high school indicator (Students 102 and 105)	Are these students struggling with the same indicators as they were pre-high school?	Both of these students (Students 102 and 105) had problems with attendance and course failures pre-high school as well as this semester. Both students had more than three absences and/or failing grades in core courses during at least one grading period in 8th grade.	These two students need better transition supports before high school so that their needs are addressed upon entering high school. These students will need additional continued academic and attendance support.
What are the student information characteristics of students identified as at-risk?	Four of the six at-risk students are economically disadvantaged (students 103, 104, 105, and 109). All of these students are flagged for either or both indicators of Grading Period 1 First 20 Day Attendance and Grading Period 1 Course Fails	Is there a particular subgroup that is being disproportionately represented? Did the pattern change from the feeder school?	No subgroups are disproportionately represented.	?

STEP 5 – Identify and Implement Interventions

✓ *What interventions are currently implemented in the school(s) and/or division? How successful are they? What type of ongoing support is provided to implement interventions with fidelity? What data is collected about the impact of interventions?*

    o   Existing Interventions

        o   Academic Interventions (Tutoring, after school services)

- Review your school policies for make-up work and grading for these identified students and ensure teachers are enacting the policy consistently.
- Identify opportunities to academic recovery i.e., technology, flexible-scheduling, peer tutoring, after-school tutoring, Saturday tutoring, etc.
  o Credit Recovery
    - Identify opportunities to credit recovery i.e., technology, peer tutoring, after-school tutoring, double-dosing, summer school, Saturday tutoring, etc.
  o These interventions have been successful in getting students back on-track for graduation. The school administration is supportive in providing staff time and funds for these implementations to take place. The data regarding the interventions and their effectiveness is house in the VEWS Tool.

✓ *What structures currently exist to support students who are at-risk of being off-track for graduation (e.g., flexible scheduling, summer school, credit recovery, behavior support, attendance and truancy interventions, etc.)?*

  o Credit Recovery, flexible scheduling, summer school, and double dosing all currently exist to support students who are at-risk of being off-track for graduation.

✓ *Do trends in the data identify the need for particular types of interventions (e.g., professional development for teachers on instructional strategies, ninth-grade transition supports, opportunities for extended learning beyond the school day, etc.)?*

  o Yes. Because several students are struggling with math content, we are going to give professional development to math teachers to focus on these student needs.

✓ *How will you identify promising interventions to match the critical issue(s) (e.g., attend conferences, purchase intervention, ask/visit other schools/divisions, study teams, review literature, seek help from regional or state agencies)?*

✓ *What resources (time, materials, personnel, funding) are necessary to support the critical issue(s)? What resources are available to support the identified students? If not sufficient, how will you obtain additional resources to address the critical issue(s) (e.g., cost-sharing across programs, grants, other funding sources)? How will the resources be distributed among groups and individual students based on their needs?*

How will school/division staff be included as part of these efforts? How will this information be communicated to them? How will they be involved in decision making, implementation, and monitoring?

From STEP 4	Intervention	Existing	Target	Resources	Evide

How has the additional information informed the questions raised?	What needs do analyses indicate?		or New?	Audience (grade, content area, gender, etc.)	Required (Time, Staffing, Other)	Effecti
Two of these students (Student IDs 102 and 105) had unexcused absences and were truant. Two of these students (Students 104 and 109) were ill and had excused absences from school.	The truant students need support and encouragement to attend school.	Attendance Interventions: • Daily contact with chronically absent students. • Family engagement program, where schools will reach out to families to create a line of communication, so that the families can find resources to support their children. • Program to establish stronger support relationships between adults and students, i.e., Student Advisories, Attendance Watch List.	New	Students struggling with attendance		
All of the students flagged for course failures are failing Algebra I and Geometry.	These students need additional mathematics instruction support.	Math Academic Interventions: Professional Development for math teachers Identify opportunities to academic recovery, i.e., technology, peer tutoring, summer school, flexible scheduling, after-school tutoring, double-dosing, Saturday tutoring, etc. A tiered approach will be used to help students increase their math skills. Increasingly rigorous tutoring services, as well as content recovery courses will be implemented to help these students successfully complete Algebra courses.	New	Students struggling with math content		
Two of the students flagged for both attendance and course failures are failing because of lost instruction on fundamental topics covered during their absences at the beginning of the semester (Students 104 and 105). One student (Student	These students need extra support and perhaps additional instruction to learn missed content due to early absences in the school year and not fall further behind. This student may need an opportunity	Academic Intervention (Tutoring, after school services) Review your school policies for make-up work and grading for these identified students and ensure teachers are enacting the policy consistently. Identify opportunities to academic recovery, i.e., technology, peer tutoring, summer school, flexible scheduling, after-school tutoring, double-dosing, Saturday tutoring,	Existing	Students struggling with academic content		

From STEP 4		Intervention	Existing or New?	Target Audience (grade, content area, gender, etc.)	Resources Required (Time, Staffing, Other)	Evide... Effecti...
How has the additional information informed the questions raised?	*What needs do analyses indicate?*					
102) missed enough days to automatically fail under the school's attendance policy.	to recover the lost credits in order to not fall further behind.	etc.				
Students 102 and 110 failed enough courses to bring their GPAs below the indicator thresholds for being at-risk of being off-track.	These students need extra instruction and support in the content in which they are struggling.	Credit Recovery Identify opportunities to credit recovery i.e., technology, peer tutoring, summer school, flexible scheduling, after-school tutoring, double-dosing, Saturday tutoring, etc.	Existing	Students who failed a class and need to make it up		
Both of these students (Students 102 and 105) had problems with attendance and course failures pre-high school as well as this semester. Both students had more than three absences and/or failing grades in core courses during at least one grading period in 8th grade.	These two students need better transition supports before high school so that their needs are addressed upon entering high school. These students will need additional continued academic and attendance support.	Academic Intervention (Tutoring, after school services) Identify opportunities to academic recovery i.e., technology, peer tutoring, summer school, flexible scheduling, after-school tutoring, double-dosing, Saturday tutoring, etc.	Existing	Students struggling with academic content		
No subgroups are disproportionately represented.	?	Transition Supports (attendance, academic) Identify opportunities to academic recovery i.e. technology, peer tutoring, summer school, flexible scheduling, after-school tutoring, double-dosing, Saturday tutoring, etc. Review vertical alignment across schools of curriculum. Review course grades across classes.	New	Students who are have attendance/academic issues before high school and need transition supports to address these problems before high school		

STEP 6 – Collect Data, Analyze, Revise

Step 6 allows for the EWS team to reflect on the EWS process and revise their procedures and decisions to inform and improve the process in the future.

✓ *Based on evidence, are there any indicators that seem to be better at identifying students who are falling off-track (higher yield indicators)? If some indicators are more predictive than others, consider monitoring them in the VEWS Tool.*

✓ *What existing or newly implemented interventions for students who were identified as off-track for graduation ensured that these students got back on-track, or are headed in that direction?*

✓ *What needs are not being addressed by current interventions to support students in getting back on-track for graduation? Are there any policies, organizational systems, or educational approaches at the school and/or division level that may need to be revised to ensure students are able to get back on-track for graduation?*

✓ *Based on analysis of previous cohorts of students, can the school or division validate the EWS indicators of risk? Are the indicator thresholds (e.g., 10% of days missed) appropriate? Should they be adjusted? How many or what percentage of students who were identified as being on-track or borderline did not graduate with their cohort or dropped out? How many or what percentage of students who were identified as being off-track or borderline did graduate on time? If trends are apparent in the division or individual school, do the trends continue over time?*

✓ *Are there groups of students who are consistently identified across cohorts (i.e. subgroups within the groups of off-track students who did not graduate but should have in 2008, 2007, etc.)?*

✓ *How can the tool be improved and kept valid, including enhancing the reports, adding additional evidence-based indicators, adjusting flag thresholds and cut-scores, etc.?*

✓ *Are there systemic problems in the division or school (e.g., risk factors that are prevalent from year-to-year, feeder patterns, schools with persistent problems, groups of students who are consistently identified)?*

VEWS ToolEWS Team

✓ *What were the biggest challenges the team faced? Biggest successes?*

✓ *What made your job easier or more difficult as the year progressed? What changes could make your job easier next year?*

✓ *What recommendations for the next year's EWS team do you have?*

     o How frequently should the EWS team meet?
     o Who should continue to be on the EWS team? [Note: There should be some individuals who overlap from year to year to ensure continuity over time.] What specific members or roles need to maintain representation on the EWS team (e.g., division administrator, principal, counselor, teacher, etc.)? Who could leave?
     o How much time in meetings and out of meetings do individual members need?
     o What additional resources could support the team?